

**To:** Ruhl, Christopher[Ruhl.Christopher@epa.gov]; Guria, Peter[Guria.Peter@epa.gov]; Ostrander, David[Ostrander.David@epa.gov]  
**From:** Grantham, Nancy  
**Sent:** Fri 9/4/2015 11:19:16 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Matt Brown/AP Qs (for Mathy) --- Final

Answers taken from already approved material - for ap interview with mathy today

Running through Eoc and opa material now

Thx ng

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Grantham, Nancy" <Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov>  
**Date:** September 3, 2015 at 9:59:19 PM MDT  
**To:** "Stanislaus, Mathy" <Stanislaus.Mathy@epa.gov>, "Brooks, Becky" <Brooks.Bekky@epa.gov>  
**Cc:** "Grantham, Nancy" <Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: Matt Brown/AP Qs (for Mathy) --- Final

**Results of samples taken of both sediments and water have been steadily trending downward; is that expected to continue? Have levels reached pre-spill levels all around?**

*The metal concentrations of the samples are below surface water and sediment/soil recreational screening levels, and are being maintained at pre-event conditions.*

**Given what's been learned so far, is a significant recurrence of contamination in the water still considered unlikely?**

The language in the previous response (red text) came from the EPA statement yesterday:

*EPA has reviewed the data which includes comparison to screening levels for exposure during recreational use. The metal concentrations of the samples are below surface water and sediment/soil recreational screening levels, and are being maintained at pre-event conditions. Based on previous monitoring events, it has been shown that metal concentrations may fluctuate from time to time because of water surges due to heavy rains or other events that may change the water flow rates or volume.*

However, if he doesn't want to get into potential fluctuations, we could just keep it simple. I've pulled another statement (from page 4 of the cleared media responses). See revised

version below:

EPA has reviewed the data which includes comparison to screening levels for exposure during recreational use. The metal concentrations of the samples are below surface water and sediment/soil recreational screening levels, and are being maintained at pre-event conditions. Given that there is no change in the sediment contaminant levels, we don't expect any re-mobilization of Gold King event-related contaminants to pose health risks.

**In the EPA's view, is there any reason for irrigation systems along the path of the spill still to be shut down? Does the EPA foresee any future high-water events necessitating the closure of those systems (and/or drinking water intakes)?**

It's not uncommon for sediments to move, especially in areas of fast water flow or in times of fast water flow, such as heavy rain events or snow melt. Because the metal concentrations in sediments analyzed after the Gold King Mine release are similar to those before the release, we do not expect the movement of the sediments during high water flow events would result in water or sediment concentrations unusual for this area.

**Has further progress been made in a long-term solution for Gold King and adjacent mines? Any details on what is being considered beyond the retention ponds now in place would be appreciated.**

It's too early to determine the technical solution that will be effective in addressing water flow from the mine. Our short term goal is to stabilize the site and add another mine water treatment system that would be accessible through the winter.

**It's our understanding that 15 other mine investigations were put on hold to assess whether there were risks of another accident; do those remain on hold? If not, why not? If so, what is expectation on when that assessment will be complete.**

We're compiling a list of mining sites under EPA jurisdiction where the Administrator's statement on field investigations would apply.

**Members of Congress have been asking for lots of different documents, ranging from internal communications and prior planning for this site, to communications relating to ongoing investigations and the long-term impacts of the spill. Some of that information already has been released. Are there other items that are being held back pending the investigation by IG, Interior? When are those expected to be released?**

EPA takes its commitment to transparency seriously. Since the Gold King Mine incident, EPA has been inundated with requests for documents related to the response. EPA has posted a large number of documents on our response website, many of which are responsive to the requests from stakeholders, local communities, the media, the general public and members of Congress. EPA is continuing to identify additional documents responsive to the request and will provide them to the committee, as soon as they are available.

**Do you expect to be addressing broader issue abandoned mines at the hearing?  
Wondering if there are any opportunities seen there.**

**Beyond abandoned mines, there have already been attempts to link this accident to other matters before the EPA, from the Clean Power Plan to the waters of the US rule; can you comment on whether there's any relation to those and the Gold King spill?**